

WHERE THERE'S A WILL

A Detective Story Wherein the Mystery of the Conrad Murder is Unravelled.

SYNOPSIS

Gordon, a newspaper reporter, is awakened by a telephone summons to visit the residence of Anthony Conrad, a retired broker, who has been found dead on his couch.

Suspicion points to Gustav Conrad, his nephew, with whom he had quarreled the night before and who to all appearances tried to commit suicide after killing his uncle.

Physicians find that Gustav has a chance to recover. The will leaves \$5,000 to Gustav and the balance of the estate to George Mallet, another nephew.

Not satisfied with the apparent solution of the case, Semi Dual, the old man of Mystery, takes a hand in the tangle of human life.

Dual asks Gordon to go with Johnson of the detective force and search the Conrad premises thoroughly for other evidence.

"All right, Glace. If you can find anything which will let young Conrad out I won't kick, and from what this Dual said I reckon that's his lay. Lead me to it, son."

"Come along," I told him, and passed on into the larger room.

There I took the glass from my pocket and began to examine windowsills and the floor. Not that I had any hopes of picking out any footprints, save those made during the morning, but I meant to let no chance to escape.

Johnson perched on an end of the desk and watched me, grinning.

"You look like a stage detec, son," he jeered as I worked. "Dual thinks this an outside job?"

"I don't know what Dual thinks," I snapped back. "He's a habit of not telling everything he knows."

"Go ahead," said Johnson, and lighted a cigar.

"By the way," I suggested, get Bryce on the phone and tell him to keep in touch. Tell him to have that gun and those hairs handy when we need them, and to be ready to bring them to us."

Johnson shot me a quick glance. "Is that from you or Dual?" he inquired. "I was talkin' with Bryce after Dual called me up, and he says the chap's the real stuff. Does he want Bryce to stay close?"

I nodded.

Johnson reached for the phone. While he was talking I went on into the alcove where the body of Conrad had lain and continued my search.

There wasn't a thing I could find. Window-sills, floors, even the panes of the windows, I went over, but they showed nothing which I could call suspicious. Johnson sauntered in as I worked.

"I got Bryce, and he's on edge about the thing," he remarked. "He says I'd better git into the wagon before you boys crack the whip. Is there anything I can do?"

"Not yet," I responded. "I can't find anything here."

I rose and we both went into the unused room between the study of Conrad and Gustav's room. There again I got down and began to examine the floor.

It was close by the window of the end of the room that I found my first reward.

There, as I swept the carpet with my glass, I found something which sent my heart into my mouth. It was a faint outline in the nap of the piling—just the dim outline of a footprint.

But—the toe pointed inward and the outline was plainer at the heel than at the toe.

It was as though some one might have thrown a leg across the sill and planted a foot on the carpet, rising through the casement, with his full weight thrown upon the heel of his shoe. I bent above it and scanned it through the glass.

There was no mistaking its import. Some one had stepped there, and about its outline was a fine line of powdered soil, as though particles of earth had clung to the sole of the shoe.

I beckoned Johnson, and he came quickly to my side. I pointed, and he dropped to his knees beside me, glanced at the print, and a second later at me.

"Did anybody stand or sit here this morning?" I asked.

He shook his head.

"I don't think so," he considered. "The flaties stayed in the room with Conrad, and neither Bryce nor I was here. Sommers might have sat here or stood by the window—where's the other foot?"

I nodded.

"Exactly! Then, Johnson, somebody stepped in through this window,

and that somebody had damp soil on his foot, which has since dried. Well—"

"You're right! By the great guns, you're right!" he exclaimed in some excitement. "Come on an' we'll see if we can find any more of these."

"Wait a minute," I checked him. "Let's measure this one now. You takes notes."

I drew the tape and carefully took the measurements of the print, calling them to the detective, who wrote them down in a book.

"Now," I said as we finished, "we'll look for some more."

We searched, but without success. There was that single print, pointing inward from the window, and then came the wide path of many other feet leading from door to door across the room, and into the one where Gustav had lain.

Whatever may have been there earlier in the day was smuged and obliterated by the others which had tracked across them. Once or twice we thought we had found one similar to the first, but we could not be sure.

Johnson swore.

"What a bunch of darned fools we were not to look this morning!" he berated himself and Bryce. "But honest, Glace, the thing looked so clear—"

"That, as Miss Burton said, you never looked below the surface," I finished.

Johnson scowled and wagged his head.

"That's right," he admitted. But how in time did Dual know the thing was here?"

"I don't know," I confessed, "but he must have had a reason. He never makes a statement unless he does."

"But he wasn't here, puzzled Johnson. "He was miles away, an' he didn't see anything at all, nor know anything at all, and yet—"

"He knew something, all right. You've got to admit that," I took him up.

"It looks that way," he grumbled. "But good Lord—how?"

I had been thinking. Now, as he paused in confused question, I turned the subject back to the footprint.

"If a man came in through that window he must have laid hands on the sill, Johnson. Come over there and see if we can find any fingerprints."

He started to attention.

"Right you are," he snapped out and reached the window in a bound, bent, and began to scan the wood of the sill with a careful eye.

"Take the glass," I suggested, "and look about a foot inward from each end. He'd reach through, grasp the sill with his hands, and swing his leg between his arms. The footprint is about the middle of the sill if you'll look."

He nodded, took the glass without looking around, and continued his inspection.

"And here they are!" he cried out in sudden exultation. "See? He did just what you said. Wait! I'll take a print of those. Take the glass!"

He literally tossed it to me and reached into his pocket, from which he drew a small package of gray powder, dusting it lightly over the region where the hands of the unknown had rested.

Then with a small sheet of carbon-paper he pressed lightly and smoothly over the dusted outlines and lifted away a gray impress of the telltale marks.

He lifted a face which had grown thinner and more tense.

"Glace," he remarked, "we're on the trail of something big and devilish, and we're going to run it down. If this goes like it looks, Gus Conrad was shot by the man who climbed in this window. You can bet I'm going to look below the surface from now on, all right, and I'll get this Jasper if it takes ten years!"

Very carefully he put the paper away.

"I reckon we'd better go outside," he added.

We left the house and went into the grounds.

Then we walked around and came down the side, until we were below the window where the man must have entered. There we both went down in the grass and crept carefully toward the wall, scanning the earth for a sign, but not until we were directly beneath the window did we find it.

Then, just where the grass of the lawn ended and left a little bare patch of earth, close to the wall, we came upon another footprint, pressed

deep into the damp earth. Johnson pointed it out with a thin-lipped smile.

"There it is," he said quite calmly. "He stood there and reached up and gripped the sill. He put all his weight on that foot when he stretched up, and he pressed it in deep. Go on and measure it, and see how it matches up."

I got out the tape, and with hands which trembled I laid it lengthwise and across the well-made print. One by one I gave the measurements to Johnson, and he wrote them down beneath the others from the print inside. At the end he nodded in satisfaction.

"They tally," he announced. "And see here."

He pointed to a fresh scratch on a brick, broad and smudged, with a bit of mud sticking to it—such a mark as might be made by the toe of a shoe scraping against the wall.

We looked at it for fully a minute; then I turned away.

"Now," I announced, "I've got to see the Porters. Do you know where they are?"

"Somewhere at the back," said Johnson, following along.

We went back into the front hall and walked down to a door at the rear, where I rapped. Footsteps came from the other side, and it was swung back by the old valet.

"Can you come in front for a few moments?" I requested, and he nodded and stepped into the hall.

Once in the front room, I asked him if there was any way in which I could obtain a sample of the younger Conrad's writing.

He viewed the request with some surprise.

"All the writing done of late was done by Mr. Gustav," he volunteered; "but I rather fancy it would not do to take any of them away, they being mostly business papers and the like."

"I only want a mere specimen," I explained. "Just a word or two."

He knit his brows for a moment.

"How would a small note-book or something like that do?" he asked.

"It would be the very thing," I replied.

Porter turned to Johnson.

"Will it be all right, sir, to let him have it? I was thinking maybe there might be a note-book in the coat-pocket of the suit Mr. Gus was wearing last night."

"Glace is acting with me," reassured Johnson. "If you can dig up what he wants, get about it quick."

Porter nodded and walked through the door toward Gustav's room. Johnson and I followed.

The coat and vest of the wounded man still hung over the back of a chair, and Porter immediately began an examination of the pockets, presently withdrawing a small book bound in soft red leather, and extending it to me.

"That is a memorandum-book he always carried," he stated. "You can see he's writ his name on the front page himself."

I opened the book and verified his words.

"This is his own writing? You're sure?" I questioned.

"Oh, yes, sir!" declared Porter. "I'm sure of it, sir."

"And, Porter," I continued, "do you know if the window in the next room was opened or shut during last night?"

"It was open, sir. Mr. Conrad always had it open, winter and summer. He liked the air, sir, though he always had this here window open. That was why nobody slept in this room, sir."

"Then it would be easy for somebody to get in that way, Porter?" My "Some one to get in, sir!" cried the man. "Why, yes, sir. But—My Gawd, sir—you don't think that anybody did get in—not last night, sir?"

I asked your pardon, but just what do you mean by that?"

"We mean that some one came in that window and murdered your master, and tried to murder Mr. Gustav, and thought he had succeeded," said Johnson.

"Then"—Porter's hands were shaking and his lips writhed above the question—"then Mr. Gustav wouldn't have killed the master, sir?"

"No."

"Thank Gawd, sir!" stammered the servant. "I've been thinking—and thinking—and hoping, sir—but I couldn't see it. I'm glad as you can."

"We can't as yet," grinned Johnson; "but you can bet we will."

"Yes, sir," said Porter. "If that's all, sir, I'll be going and tell the wife. She's takin' it hard, sir."

He shuffled out.

Things were moving. I had the sample of Gustav's writing, and we had two footprints and some fingerprints.

Once more, as before, Dual's wonderful insight into events was being justified as the wheel went round.

All of Johnson's skepticism had vanished. His thin face was eager, tense. There was a look of purpose in his eyes, which I knew would remain until he had run his quarry to earth.

No doubt now but that he would continue to look deep below the surface,

or rest until he had found the man whose feet and hands fitted those marks.

Like myself, he had witnessed the truth of Dual's methods, and, as in my own case, it was Dual's wonderful force back of him which was now urging him on; though I knew that he did not know it as I did.

As the servant's back vanished into the hall Johnson turned to me.

"Now, is there anything else we were to do?" he asked.

I nodded and I smiled. Even at that time it struck me as rather odd to have this member of the city detective bureau asking me what he should do next. Nevertheless, I did not hesitate about my reply.

"Dual said he wanted us to get hold of the will and be able to produce it when it was wanted."

"Mallet put it back in the drawer," said Johnson. "All we got to do is take it out, I guess."

He drew out the drawer and lifted the document from it, tossing it upon the desk.

"I wonder why Mallet didn't take it with him, seeing that he's the major heir?"

I shook my head.

"Maybe he meant to come back after it later. He knows he can trust the Porters, and probably didn't want to appear too anxious about it this morning. I'm going to look at the thing again."

I opened it out and spread it upon the desk, pushing back some loose papers to make more room for it, and then I paused, for under the papers there was a spot.

It was nearly circular and slightly raised, higher in the middle than on the edges, and a dead chalky white. It wasn't very large—not bigger in circumference than a large pea—but on the black surface of the mission desk it showed in glaring contrast.

I put out my finger and touched it. It felt dry and yet brittle to the touch.

"See here, Johnson," I exclaimed, "what do you suppose this is?"

He bent down and eyed it, put out his finger and felt it, and finally raised his head.

"It looks like a flake of starch," he declared.

"Take your penknife and scrape it off and add it to the collection, whatever it is," I suggested. "We'll let Dual take a squirt at it, anyway. Get it off without breaking, if you can."

Johnson attacked it with the small blade of his knife and, working gently, succeeded in scaling it off the wood. Then he slid it upon a piece of paper and folded it up with exceeding care.

That done we once more turned to the will, and I spread it out on the desk.

Together we read it over, but there seemed nothing in it which could give us a further clue, which shows how a person may look right at a thing and still never see it.

It almost seems at times to carry out the claims of those people who allege that nothing exists save thought, and that what we see is only what we think we see, and isn't there at all.

Just as I was on the point of folding up the will and slipping it into my pocket the light, striking across it, revealed something I had overlooked.

I spread it out again, and got out the glass and focused it on that part of the page where the light had struck. Then I saw it plainer, and I let out a yell.

For, close to the end of the line in which the word "George" appeared, there was the dim, almost imperceptible outline of a finger-print!

I gave the glass to Johnson and pointed to the spot. He bent and peered at it as I had done.

"Do you see it?" I asked in some excitement.

He nodded and laid down the glass.

"It's there," he said almost in awe. "If I ever get into a case like this again, where I make so many blunders in the same length of time, I'm going to cut the game and go to driving a milk-cart. The whole trouble was the thing looked so darned simple that it had me hypnotized. I just went to sleep and let anybody tell me anything was true. Well, at all events, this justifies us in taking the will along as evidence. Hand it over, son."

"But Dual wants it," I made protest.

"And he's going to get it!" flashed Johnson. "Good Lord, that fellow's all to the good! He can sit in a chair and beat me at my own game. I'm going to see him before this thing is over. He's got a method I'd like to get next to myself."

I handed over the will, as he desired and smiled to myself.

I had an idea that Dual's method, as he called it, would take some "getting next" to that Johnson wouldn't be up to, but I didn't tell him just what I thought.

He had drawn the carbon-print he had made of the marks on the window sill from his pocket, and was scowling at it in deep thought. Presently he put it away again.

"I won't say for sure till I am sure," he began speaking; "but I've an

idea that these marks and that on the will are the same."

"If that's so, the murderer opened this drawer last night and examined the will!" I exclaimed.

"It looks that way now," Johnson agreed.

It seemed to me that we must have accomplished what we had come for, and it was nearly two o'clock.

"Dual told me to call him up," I told Johnson and picked up the phone.

I gave Central Dual's private number, and in an instant he answered my call. I imagined him at the desk, waiting for the ring, ready to guide my course into the next stage of the chase, and I smiled to myself as his voice thrilled along the wire.

"All through, Gordon? Now, listen closely. You have found what you sought, of course? Next, you will go to the St. Mary's Hospital and inquire at the office for anything which Dr. Sommers may have left there for me. He promised to leave it, subject to my call, this morning. After that find a way to get a specimen of Mallet's writing. You have done such things before, and I am leaving it to you. Use your taxi and do not waste time. Also, while you are at the hospital you may as well see Miss Burton and tell her for me that I said her sweetheart is innocent of all wrong-doing, and that he will live."

"After you have done this you may go to the Record office and report to Smithson, and then come on here. Now, call Johnson to the phone."

CHAPTER V.

A Mysterious Envelope.

I left Johnson at the phone and went out and down to the street where my taxi still waited, entered it and told the driver to take me to St. Mary's Hospital where Sommers had sent Gustav Conrad for the operation, which it seemed, from Dual's words, was to save his life.

How like Dual was that message, I thought, as I rolled along.

Out of his busy scheming and planning to catch the cowardly assassin who had struck down two men the night before, he could yet find time to give a thought to the woman who lingered beside the bed of one of those men in anxiety and heart-sick fear.

Suffering always appealed to Semi Dual, and he would relieve it if he could.

The golden light of the spring day was dimming. Glancing out of the window I noticed that the clouds in the sky, light and fleecy at noon, had increased in number, and had grown darker in hue.

It looked as though we might be in for spring rain. I drew back from the window and lighted a cigarette and smoked and thought over everything from the start.

I wondered what it was Dual expected me to get at the hospital that could possibly bear on the case. Even as I asked myself the question we turned into the grounds of the hospital itself, and slowed down before the main door.

Again telling my man to wait, I went up the great steps to the door and rang the bell. Presently a Sister of Charity came shuffling along the tile floor in her billowing robes of black and set the door ajar.

To her I made known my wants, and with a wordless gesture she turned and led me back through the hall with its faint reek of drugs, its suggestion of nth degree cleanness, to the office, and waved me to enter.

(To be Continued)

The Use of Rice in Salads.

The use of rice in salad is still a novelty, says a Cornell Reading Course pamphlet, published by the New York state college of agriculture at Cornell University, "and perhaps a word devoted to the subject may not come amiss. A rice salad is often the best solution of the question, 'How shall I set up a dainty dish for a luncheon or supper which shall be filling enough to satisfy hearty appetites and yet not cost too much?' Left overs of meat, chicken, and ham may be pieced out with equal quantities of cold boiled rice; canned salmon and tuna fish are really improved by such treatment; cold boiled cod and rice make a most tempting salad; and hard cooked eggs may always be pressed into service. Left overs of vegetables may also be used up in this fashion. French dressing, mayonnaise dressing, and simple beiled dressing are equally good with these salads."

The Return Invitation

One young man met another, a friend of his, and to do the proper thing invited him to a French dinner. Everything was served in good style, but the different courses were dished up in very small portions.

At its conclusion, the one who had extended the invitation, and who was perfectly accustomed to the general style of the restaurant said:

"Pretty good meal, that for a dollar eh?"

"Yes," responded his friend, who was still hungry, "first rate! Now you have one with me."

Drafts under the floors are death to pigs and even to grown hogs.

PATENT MEDICINE IS OF OLD ORIGIN

ANCIENT PRESCRIPTIONS FOUND TO BE VALUABLE IN BY GONE YEARS

Earliest Remedies Said to Possess Very Much Merit.

Because Americans buy and use such large quantities of patent medicines that many manufacturers have made large fortunes in the business one might naturally conclude that there is a great deal physically wrong with the people of this country and that this is the age of patent medicines, but it appears that secret medical preparations were made and vended in large quantities many centuries ago.

Indeed a few of these secret remedies became so popular and were considered of so much value to ailing humanity that the reigning monarchs in past centuries bought the secrets from their discoverers paying for them large sums of money. It has been found for example, that Louis XIV of France paid handsome sums for three such preparations, namely, Helvetius' ipocac remedy, Glauber's kermis mineral and Talbor's cinchona remedy.

It would seem that some of the early secret remedies must have possessed some merit, for some that were patented as early as the sixteenth centuries are now standard remedies, being highly esteemed and sold in large quantities. An interesting and unusual fact in connection with some of the medicines which made their debut as patent remedies is that they are now held in good repute by practicing physicians who prescribe them for their patients.

Among these are Fowler's solution of potassium arsenate, which was first made by an apothecary named Fowler who kept the remedy as a secret and refused to admit that it contained arsenic. Another is paregoric which was originated by Dr. Le Mori of the Leyden university, and still another is Dover's powders, first prepared by Thomas Dover, a doctor and pirate. Common bicarbonate of soda, which is universally used in cooking was originated under the name of "universal salt" by a Berlin apothecary.

Although all modern physicians look with contempt on patent medicines, some of the earliest of the preparations were introduced by physicians. For example, one Dr. Gregory, a professor of medicine at Edinburgh, originated a compound powder of rhubarb; Dr. Turner a distinguished surgeon of London introduced an ointment—calamine ointment—and Dr. Snyderham, a noted English physician, brought out wine of opium.

FLORIDA MOUND YIELDS BONES OF HUGE INDIANS

Pottery, Axes and Arrow Heads are Also Found Buried With Prehistoric Seminoles.

A prehistoric burial mound of the Seminole Indians has just been found at Magnolia Springs, Fla. Dr. E. J. Tomson and John Kendrick, a well known artist of New York, made the discovery a few days ago, and after two days of excavation.

Three skeletons, half a dozen skulls four arrow heads, and pieces of pottery, were obtained on the first day, three more skeletons and six arrow heads and stone axes were dug up. Dr. Tomson said it was impossible to say how long the bodies and relics had been buried there, but he believed them to be prehistoric.

The skeletons all measured more than 6 feet. One measuring 6 feet 6 inches is perfectly preserved, and in the skull the teeth remain perfect. The size of the jaw is remarkable. The root of a tree has grown in the exact shape of another skull.

The skeletons were found lying face downward with heads to the south. It is a known fact that the aborigines buried with their chiefs and priests their favorite pieces of pottery containing food to nourish them on their journey to the Happy Hunting Ground.

It is also known that the tribes burned the dead and so as to preserve their dead and Dr. Tomson says the sand excavated has the queer look of burned sand. As there is no suitable stone in Florida the doctor has concluded that the arrow heads originally came from some of the Northern Indian tribes.

The mound is sixty feet long, 30 feet wide and twelve feet high. It is located in a clump of live oaks and long leaf pines, 200 feet from the St. John's River. The largest four trees almost mark the four corners of the mound. They are nearly 50 feet high and 4 feet in diameter.

The explorers are continuing their work in the hope of adding more curious to their collections. They will send the skeletons to the Museums of Natural History at Jacksonville and New York.

To Make Compass on Watch

A watch may be used to determine the points of the compass by pointing the hour hand at the sun any time of the day and then placing the small piece of straight wire crosswise between the hour hand and the figure 12, getting exactly half way. The point of the wire which comes between the 12 and the hour hand always points due south.